



THE SENATE
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Sens. Birkholz and George introduce bills to clean up brownfields and spur job creation

Lansing – Sens. Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp.) and Tom George (R-Texas Twp.) introduced legislation today to clean up brownfields and spur job creation in Michigan.

The bills authorize funds to be transferred into a new revolving loan fund program and the existing grant program of the Clean Michigan Initiative. The money provides new loans and grants to local units of government that have identified economic development plans and forged partnerships with the business community.

The bills are part of the JOBS plan – “Job Opportunities for Business Success” – introduced by House and Senate Republicans on Monday.

“We want to encourage people to continue to clean up and redevelop contaminated sites,” George said. “Although the current grant program has been successful, the money won’t last forever. Providing them the start-up funds necessary, with a promise of repayment, is a great incentive for people interested in making Michigan a cleaner, safer place to live, while promoting more job opportunities.”

The funds placed in the CMI revolving loan program would be repaid and, therefore, the program would be self-sustaining. This would reduce the need for large, new bond issues to support brownfield cleanup and redevelopment of existing contamination sites.

“We need to tap into the goldmines that exist in already developed areas,” Birkholz said. “By revitalizing these areas, we are providing job opportunities while improving core areas of our state’s historic manufacturing centers.”

The CMI revolving loan fund would provide local governments with greater flexibility in crafting a development deal that best meets the needs of the community and the developer. Repayment of the loan could be financed by the developer, the community’s general fund, a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, another tax increment financing authority or some other means based on the needs of the project and the creativity of the community.

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